

RESPONSE TO YOUR FOI REQUEST

Inbox



Tan Cox <clerk@bothenhamptonwalditchparishcouncil.com> Fri, Mar 19, 12:28 PM

Dear Julia

I append below a message from our Chairman, Cllr Jim Basker:

Dear Julia,

Thank you for your email questioning the level of increase in the Parish Council Precept over the last two years.

You will probably have noticed from our refreshed web site that the current Parish Council is made up of fairly recently appointed councillors. These days, as a council, we are trying to be proactive and address not only immediate issues of concern but also look ahead and plan future value enhancements for the Parish.

Hopefully you will also have noticed some improvements around the Parish. The recent placement of additional dog bins would be a case in point. Very soon and long overdue, a 30 mph speed limit will go live in Walditch. A new playground at Lower Walditch and a complete overhaul of the John Gundry play area have also been achieved. These are only examples, but are indicative of the Parish Councils much greater proactive approach to its role.

If you have been a resident in the Parish for some years you will know that there was very little movement in the amount of the annual Precept. This unfortunately reflected the general lack of activity by the Parish Council at that time. Although the biggest Parish within the Bridport catchment, our Precept was amongst the smallest.

There are also other pressures that require funds. We have to contribute annually to The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan, annual grants to CAB and bi-annual grants to the two churches.

We also have a professional Clerk with their attendant costs. Along with the growing responsibilities that are being handed down to local government and the many projects the Parish Council are initiating, this role is an essential requirement.

For some insight of how parish money is being spent you can access the annual audit on the web site. Better still we would welcome your attendance at our next Council meeting which, while remote, still includes a Democratic Half Hour where questions can be asked. If you would like to attend please let our Clerk know and she will send you a zoom invitation. The meeting is on the 12th of April at 5pm and not the posted time of 7pm.

As a final thought. Have you considered becoming a Parish Councillor? Details are on the web site and you will see that we are short of our allotted number. We are very keen to encourage caring and questioning Parishioners to join us.

Please let me know if you would like to attend on the 12th and I will send you a Zoom invite.